ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

EDUCATION **14 DECEMBER 2023**

EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during the period May 2023 to October 2023.

1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

a) The contents of this report;

b) This quarterly report will be presented on an ongoing basis to the Community Services Committee detailing all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period, and

c) That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report provides details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during the period May 2023 to October 2023.

2.2 As required for the National Improvement Framework, HMIE report on and provide grades for the following Quality Indicators (QIs) as part of full model inspections (which typically take place over a full school week):

QI 1.3 – leadership of change;
QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment;
QI 3.1 – ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion; and
QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

In addition they include a focus on the following themes from other QIs:
QI 2.2 curriculum: learning pathways
QI 2.7 partnerships: parental engagement

2.3 Short model inspections (typically over two and a half days) focus on two QIs:

QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment; and
QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

HMIE continue to have a focus on safeguarding in every inspection.

2.4 In inspections of early learning and childcare settings, HMIE use the equivalent QIs from *'How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?*'

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

a) The contents of this report;

b) This quarterly report will be presented on an ongoing basis to the Community Services Committee detailing all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period, and

c) That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

4.0 DETAIL – School Inspections

4.1 Strath of Appin Primary School was inspected week beginning 8th May using the long model inspection. Whilst the evaluations were not as strong as we would wish, the school received feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to the strong leadership of the new headteacher and the strategic direction she is providing to the school. The inspection report also notes: the staff's strong focus on children's wellbeing which is building caring, positive and trusting relationships that are supporting children to be happy, confident and more independent in school; all children in the nursery and primary stages learning Gaelic; and, parents and partners being invested in the school and sharing experiences, skills, knowledge, resources and funding to promote equity in a rural area. This is supporting children to be active members of the community of Strath of Appin.
The headteacher is working in full collaboration with the school's link manager and officers from Argyll and Bute Council, demonstrating commitment to securing improvement in the key areas identified by the inspection team.

The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland.

4.2 Dunbeg Primary School was inspected week beginning 29th May using the short model inspection. Due to the timing of the ELC's most recent Care Inspectorate visit and HMIE and the Care Inspectorate's combined commitment not to visit the same setting within an 18 month period (unless it is a joint visit), the inspection focused solely on the primary school. The school received positive feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to: children who are confident, highly articulate and respectful; creative approaches to learning which help children develop passion and knowledge about the importance of

sustainability within their school and wider community; the welcoming inclusive ethos created by the headteacher and ably supported by all staff. Staff have developed a very positive learning environment, where children experience high quality learning and teaching; the flexible and responsive approaches to planning the learning of individual children to take account of their different needs and strengths; and, the engaging and highly effective approaches to writing and numeracy and mathematics which are supporting improvements in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.

As a result of the very positive inspection at Dunbeg Primary School, the headteacher received a letter from Gillian Hamilton (Interim Chief Executive, Education Scotland) and Janie McManus (Strategic Director – Scrutiny, Education Scotland) offering their warm congratulations and acknowledging the school's highly effective practice. The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland

4.3 Carradale Primary School was inspected week beginning 5th June using the short model of inspection. The school received positive feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to: the inclusive, nurturing ethos across the nursery and school, led effectively by the Headteacher and fostered by staff; highly effective teamwork across the nursery class and school to plan and deliver support for children who require additional help with their learning. Children are well supported in the nursery and school to make good progress; and, staff and partners providing a wide range of experience children enjoy within the nursery and in their local community. This is developing children's confidence, language and social skill well. The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland.

4.4 St Joseph's Primary School was inspected week beginning 4th September using the short model of inspection. The school received positive feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to: children and staff who respect and value each other. The positive and nurturing relationships across the school and nursery. Children are motivated, engage well in their learning and are proud of their school community; staff's high expectations for children, led very effectively by the headteacher. Staff plan activities well which improves children's understanding and helps them to talk confidently about their learning; and, in the nursery, staff provide high-quality experiences and a stimulating environment that supports children to make very good progress in their learning.

The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland

4.5 Hermitage Primary School was inspected week beginning 23rd October using the short model of inspection. The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) will be accessible when these documents have been finalised and are available on Education Scotland's website.

4.6 Tayvallich Primary School will be inspected week beginning 20th November using the full model of inspection. The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) will be accessible when these documents have been finalised and are available on Education Scotland's website.

4.7 A summary of all external school inspection audit reports published by Education Scotland across Argyll and Bute Education Service establishments during the period May 2023 to October 2023 is provided in **Appendix 1**.

4.8 A summary of the inspection outcomes per establishment detailing strengths and areas for improvement is provided in **Appendix 2**.

5.0 DETAIL – National Thematic Inspections

5.1 In addition to visits to schools and settings, HMIE have also been carrying out national thematic inspections in the academic year 2022-2023.

5.2 The most recent phase of the national thematic inspection has focused on curriculum design. HMIE visited a selection of around 50 settings and schools between 27th February and 23rd June 2023. This will enable them to publish their findings in the format of a national report in the autumn of 2023. The selection of settings and schools included a geographical spread across Scotland and include Early Learning and Childcare, primary, secondary and special schools.

5.3 Oban High School participated in this national thematic on 7th - 8th March 2023. The Headteacher received very positive oral feedback at the end of the visit in relation to the school's rationale which reflects the school vision and values and drives the whole curriculum, the leadership roles in all curricular aspects undertaken by young people who demonstrate compassion, empathy, inclusion and respect, the community focus of the curriculum which maintains a focus on the future whilst respecting the school's heritage, the school's determination to

be inventive and creative in relation to the curriculum, and, the school's Pathways programme which is firmly embedded in the curriculum and has served the needs and aspirations of hundreds of pupils over the years.

Ulva Primary School was also involved in the national thematic focused on curriculum design. HM Inspectors visited the school on the 2nd and 3rd May. The headteacher received very positive oral feedback at the end of the visit in relation to; the school's approaches to learning for sustainability and their many partnership links including with the local Forest Ranger, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Scottish Association for Marine Science; their work with their partner school, Lochdonhead Primary, and other island schools; the provision of personalisation and choice and strong skills based and pupil led learning through the Pebble Projects and World of Work; the school's very clear and concise planning, evaluating and tracking and their excellent use of data; the headteacher's proactive approach to gaining funding to support and enhance pupils' experiences and remove barriers to learning; the school's consultation with stakeholders; the way in which staff support transitions to and from the school and, the school's knowledge of the children.

Overall findings will be shared through a national report. The link to the published report will be accessible when it is available on Education Scotland's website.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 In summary, four published reports are available from the five Inspections which took place during the period of May 2023 to October 2023.

6.2 The Education Service will continue to use the outcomes of establishment inspections to work collaboratively with our headteachers to target support and challenge to secure improvement for our children and young people.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Policy – The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.

7.2 Financial – None

7.3 Legal – None

7.4 HR – None

7.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: – None

7.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None

7.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None

7.5.3 Islands – None

7.6. Climate Change - None

7.7 Risk – Reputational risk to the Education Service following a weak report.

7.8 Customer Service – The outcome of establishment inspections of the Education Service of Argyll and Bute Council may significantly enhance or 4 detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

Wendy Brownlie
Head of Education: Performance and Improvement

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October 2023

Appendix 1 - Overview of Inspection Outcomes
Appendix 2 - Establishment Detail of Inspection Outcomes

Appendix 1 - Overview of Inspection Outcomes

Quality Indicator			Leadership of Change	Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion	Raising Attainment & Achievement
Establishment	**Sector**	**Date of Inspection**	**1.3**	**2.3**	**3.1**	**3.2**
Strath of Appin Primary School	Primary	May 2023	2	3	3	3
Strath of Appin Primary School	ELC	May 2023	2	3	3	3
Dunbeg Primary School	Primary	May 2023	N/A	5	N/A	5
Carradale Primary School	Primary	June 2023	N/A	4	N/A	4
Carradale Primary School	ELC	June 2023	N/A	4	N/A	4
St Joseph's Primary School	Primary	September 2023 2023	N/A	4	N/A	4
St Joseph's Primary School	ELC	September 2023	N/A	5	N/A	5
Hermitage Primary School	Primary	October 2023	N/A	Not yet published	N/A	Not yet published
Quality Indicator			**Leadership of Change**	**Learning, Teaching and Assessment**	**Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion**	**Raising Attainment & Achievement**
Establishment	**Sector**	**Date of Inspection**	**1.3**	**2.3**	**3.1**	**3.2**

Tayvallich Primary School	Primary	November 2023	Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published
Tayvallich Primary School	ELC	November 2023	Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published

The Six-point Scale for Inspection Grading

Excellent	**6**
Very Good	**5**
Good	**4**
Satisfactory	**3**
Weak	**2**
Unsatisfactory	**1**

Appendix 2 - Establishment Detail of Inspection Outcomes

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Report Title: Strath of Appin Primary School</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Inspection Agency: Education Scotland</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Key Findings:

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.
All staff have a strong focus on children's wellbeing. This is building caring, positive and trusting relationships that are supporting children to be happy, confident and more independent in school.
The new headteacher is starting to give strategic direction to the school from her early evaluations of practice. Staff welcome this direction.
All children in the nursery and at the primary stages learn Gaelic. Children enjoy taking part in competitions and events for Gaelic culture. The numbers in Gaelic Medium Education are increasing.
Partners and parents are invested in the school. They share experiences, skills, knowledge, resources and funding to promote equity in a rural area. This is supporting children to be active members of the community of Strath of Appin
The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council.
Increase the pace of improving key areas of the school and nursery, based on robust self-evaluation arrangements. A range of stakeholders, including staff, parents and children should have lead roles for taking forward improvements.
Maximise total immersion education to strengthen children's progress and fluency in Gaelic. This should impact on the quality and quantity of total immersion and learning through play to meet national expectations.
Increase planning for progression in the curriculum so that children make stronger progress in all aspects of their learning. Children should be given more opportunities to independently use their learning in meaningful and relevant situations
Raise children's attainment in all aspects of learning.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Date of Inspection: May 2023</td><td>Return Visit: May 2024 To be confirmed)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Natalie White - Headteacher</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Central Officer to support improvement: Rachel Binnie – Acting Education Manager</td></tr>
</table>

Report Title: **Dunbeg Primary School**

Inspection Agency: **Education Scotland**

Key Findings:

The inspection team found the following **strengths** in the school's work.

Children who are confident, highly articulate and respectful. Creative approaches to learning help children develop passion and knowledge about the importance of sustainability within their school and wider community.

- The welcoming inclusive ethos created by the headteacher and ably supported by all staff. Staff have developed a very positive learning environment, where children experience high quality learning and teaching.
- The flexible and responsive approaches to planning the learning of individual children that take account of their different strengths and needs.
- Engaging and highly effective approaches to writing and numeracy and mathematics. These are supporting improvements in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The following **areas for improvement** were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council.

- Staff should continue to improve how they give feedback to children about their learning to ensure they understand better their own strengths and what they need to do to keep improving
- Staff should continue to support children's understanding of the skills they are developing in their learning, both in class and in their wider experiences.

Date of Inspection: **May 2023**	Return Visit: N/A
Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Marny McCulloch - Headteacher	
Central Officer to support improvement: Rachel Binnie – Acting Education Manager	

Report Title: **Carradale Primary School**	
Inspection Agency: **Education Scotland**	
Key Findings: The inspection team found the following **strengths** in the school's work. • Led effectively by the headteacher, staff foster an inclusive, nurturing ethos across the nursery and school. Children experience very positive relationships with adults and other children. They feel valued, cared for and included in the life of the nursery and school. • Staff demonstrate highly effective teamwork across the nursery class and school to plan and deliver support for children who require additional help with their learning. Children are well supported in the nursery and school and make good progress. • Staff and partners provide a wide range of experiences children enjoy within the nursery and in their local community. This is developing children's confidence, language and social skills well. The following **areas for improvement** were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council. • Develop further approaches to planning learning and checking the progress children make across the curriculum. • Build on the positive steps taken to ensure all learning experiences across the nursery class and school are relevant, interesting and build on what children know.	
Date of Inspection: **June 2023**	Return Visit: N/A
Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Richard Long - Headteacher	
Central Officer to support improvement: – Rosie MacKay - Education Manager	

Report Title: **St Joseph's Primary School**

Inspection Agency: **Education Scotland**

Key Findings:

The inspection team found the following **strengths** in the school's work.

- Children and staff respect and value each other. There are positive and nurturing relationships across the school and nursery. Children are motivated, engage well in their learning and are proud of their school community.
- In the school, led very effectively by the acting headteacher, staff have high expectations for children. They plan activities well which improves children's understanding and helps them to talk confidently about their learning.
- In the nursery, staff provide high-quality experiences and a stimulating environment that supports children to make very good progress in their learning.

The following **areas for improvement** were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council.

- As planned, continue to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the primary stages, particularly for children who require additional support with their learning.
- Teachers should continue to work with each other, and colleagues in other schools, to develop a better understanding of national standards.

Date of Inspection: **September 2023**	Return Visit: N/A
Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Pauline Walsh – Acting Headteacher	
Central Officer to support improvement: – Brendan Docherty - Education Manager	